

Media Contact: Rebecca Meekma 949-497-0517
rmeekma@sawdustartfestival.org

*For Immediate Release
June 6, 2005*

SAWDUST ART FESTIVAL IS TOPS ON THE WEST COAST

Laguna Beach, CA---Organizers of the first Sawdust Art Festival might have thought it far-fetched that one day the Laguna Beach art show, which had its beginnings as a protest exhibition on a vacant lot along Pacific Coast Highway, would be named the top art festival on the West Coast and third in the nation. In 1966, the year it all began, the Sawdust Art Festival was viewed as the renegade offshoot from the local art establishment, though the heart of the matter was aimed at providing a venue for all artists without a stringent jury system to preclude those with 'out-there' art.

The recent designation as the Best in the West, determined by a readership poll through *AmericanStyle Magazine*, a national visual arts publication, affirms the Sawdust Art Festival is still in a class of its own and though proud of the recent laurels plans never to rest on them.

This summer marks the 39th Sawdust Art Festival, which runs July 1 through September 4 in Laguna Beach, and boasts its mainstay tradition of showcasing the work of Laguna Beach artists in a three-acre outdoor sawdust-covered eucalyptus grove the Festival has called home since 1968.

Visitors are also made to feel at home amidst the conclave of 209 fine artists and craftspeople who exhibit and sell their original work in an informal atmosphere. Their creations include jewelry, photography, ceramics, glass, textiles and clothing, paintings,

(Continued)

page 2/Sawdust Art Festival 2005 Overview

wood and metal art, scrimshaw and mixed media. But the list is ever-changing on what one will see any given year.

There's always a curiosity about what's new at the Sawdust and with **30 exhibitors participating for the first time**, the influx of art never seen at the Festival before will be plentiful.

In addition, tying in with the theme *Sun, Surf and Sawdust*, **36 Sawdust Art Festival exhibitors turned plain skimboards into art masterpieces for Project Skimboard**. A variety of media were used including acrylic, oil and watercolor paints; ceramic mosaic; fused glass; bamboo; metalwork; resin overlay and clay. Subjects include marine life, ocean views, coastal landmarks, animals, mermaids and abstract designs.

Donated by Victoria Skimboards of Laguna Beach, the skimboard art will be displayed and offered for bidding in a silent auction at each respective artists' booths from July 1 through August 4. **Ten of the boards will be sold in a live auction held on August 5 at the Festival grounds**, the date all silent bids become finalized as well. Auction proceeds will be donated to support Orange County charities.

Other philanthropic events include the **19th Annual Sawdust Benevolence Fund Auction on Sunday, August 28** from noon to 3 p.m. when original art donated by Sawdust Art Festival exhibitors is sold to raise funds to help any Laguna Beach artist in dire need.

Game show enthusiasts and art aficionados alike can give their brain a tease during the new **"Art on Stage"**, a Concentration-style puzzler which has contestants figuring out

(Continued)

page 3/Sawdust Art Festival 2005 Overview

how to put an original work of art back together again. The event is hosted by Laguna Beach Arts Commissioner Mike Tauber and will be held every Saturday from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the Main Stage.

Other art on stage includes the many demonstrations artisans put on in their booths or at popular viewing sites such as the ceramics' booth and the glass blowing area. Crowds gather whenever a master artist is at the enclosed kiln showing the detailed process involved in firing and shaping glass into a colorful vase, bowl or other piece. Though watching is fun, many prefer to try their hand at the potter's wheel attempting to throw clay into a useful or recognizable shape. No matter the end result, clay pieces are glazed and finished in a kiln and the public can take home their one-of-a-kind art (\$5 glazing fee).

Free art and crafts classes for children and adults are offered daily.

Entertainment is also plentiful with three stages sounding off with varieties of jazz, blues, country, rock and folk music. Strolling acts, stilt walkers, balloon artists, jugglers and magicians along with local bands and troubadours help keep the Festival atmosphere lively.

Special days include a **First Fridays Free promotion for Laguna Beach residents** in which they will receive free admission with identification on July 1, August 5 and September 4, which is the first Friday of each month the Sawdust Art Festival is open. The promotion is valid all day.

On the **4th of July**, the Festival will close early. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and include

(Continued)

page 4/Sawdust Art Festival 2005 Overview

an All-American July 4th entertainment lineup featuring patriotic music performed by the **Laguna Community Concert Band** on the Main Stage from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., contemporary rock vocalist **Kerry Getz** from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on the Tavern Stage, classic folk musician **George Lawton** from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the Grill Stage and zydeco band **Lisa Haley and the Zydekats** from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the Main Stage. Red, white and blue themed art classes will take place throughout the day.

Three cafes, two snack bars and a saloon with ample menu variety and plenty of outdoor seating are among the amenities.

The 2005 Sawdust Art Festival runs July 1 – September 4 and is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day except July 4th, when closing time is 6 p.m. One-day adult admission, which includes all entertainment, demonstrations and workshops, is \$7; seniors 65 and older, \$5.50; children 6 – 12, \$2 and children 5 and younger are admitted for free. A Summer Season Pass, allowing unlimited entries is \$16, while an Annual Pass, allowing unlimited entries to both the summer and Winter Fantasy shows is \$20. Please call 949-494-3030 or visit www.SawdustArtFestival.org on the web.

The Sawdust Art Festival is located at 935 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach, Free trams to the Festival grounds are available at the offsite parking lot (ACT V) located on Laguna Canyon Road (Hwy 133).

The Sawdust Art Festival is a non-profit organization, dedicated to educating the public about the art created in the community of Laguna Beach.

*The Sawdust Art Festival gratefully acknowledges sponsorship support from
The Surf and Sand Resort and Spa.*

###